/18 cont./

788 *795 to it out of curiosity, but do not fail to be touched by the strength and cohesion of Muridism, and sometimes some of them become disciples of Amadou Bamba.

Besides, the repercussions of the pilgrimage go beyond the bounds of Touba and the brotherhood. The local press, the [204] [207] official information services, and Radio-Dakar attend and participate in it. Radio reporting, newspapers, and films spread sonorous echoes and vivid images of the Magal, not only throughout the Territory, /19/ but throughout the Federation, and this contributes no little toward increasing the glory and prestige of the brotherhood and its leaders in Senegal.

793 *795 If the Magal has assured this character and this importance, it is thanks to the present head of the brotherhood, Falilou M'Backé, and, reciprocally, the aspect thus assumed by this pilgrimage has been one of the elements which have established the second Caliph at the head of the brotherhood.

Actually, at the time of his nomination as Caliph-general, he had to overcome the opposition of his nephew, Cheikh M'Backé, son of Moustapha (who aspired to succeed the latter as he had succeeded his father, Amadou Bamba), whom the council of the Murids had removed from the succession for his benefit.

By directly tying again the tradition of the Magal to the first intentions of Amadou Bamba, he brought about the unity of the Murids around himself.

He has also devoted himself to the building of the mosque, to which he applies all his attention. Not only does he collect for this purpose considerable sums at the time of the Magal, but he also seizes every opportunity to make collections or to have collections made for the benefit of this work. In particular he [533] has his representatives organize throughout the territory night sessions of religious singing in the course of which funds for the mosque are collected.

Thus he has appeared, in the eyes of the Murids, less as the successor to Amadou Moustapha than as the direct continuater

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*511 517 [541 546] Finally, eight families more or less regularly devote a part of their incomes to the heading "Diversions"; excluding No. 36 /431/ (he attends the horse races), all go to the cinema or send their children there. They are the numbers:

No. 16: 1%	No. 36: 1%
No. 22: 3.5%	No. 39: 0.6%
No. 26: 0.9%	No. 40: 0.2%
No. 33: 0.6%	No. 43: 0.6%

[204] There must be added to that five families who read and buy newspapers:

No. 34:	Employee...	0.3% of the income
No. 36:	Accountant..	0.7% --
No. 39:	Teacher.....	1.6% --
No. 41:	Employee...	0.4% --
No. 43:	Doctor.....	2.5% --

*511 423 A final question presents itself. How, when there is any, are the surpluses utilized.

We have been able to get precise data in only two cases: No. 36 built a house to which he devoted in one year, from March 1952 to March 1953, 80,000 francs. On the [427] other hand, No. 43 has taken in rent-sale a villa in Dakar, and for that he pays 12,300 francs per month.

[556] Moreover, the ambition of many, as we have said, is to become the owner of their dwelling. Some look further and want some gardens besides. Several already possess one or the other and are only trying to improve or enlarge them. One of them claimed that he had had a well dug, but he was unable or did not want to remember the sums put into this undertaking.

*511 [472] [494] [454] [426] One of the family heads succeeded in starting a transportation business after having purchased two carts and a horse. Some hoard. We believed that a cultivator had a good-sized bank account and loaned the money at usurious rates. We have

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colonies other than Martinique, Guadeloupe and Réunion and at the same time they were subjected to rule by direct decree of the Emperor.

It was under the Second Empire that the first great period of French colonial expansion in black Africa took place. It was during that regime that Faidherbe, who was to Senegal what Lugard was to Nigeria, first embarked on his African conquests. Faidherbe himself embodied this dichotomy in French colonial policy: an authoritarian agent of an authoritarian regime, he was often found introducing reforms and innovations that conformed with the most liberal application of an assimilationist policy.

Faidherbe was appointed Governor of Senegal in 1854. At the time St. Louis, according to Abbé Boilaut in his *Esquisses sénégalaises* was a city of 12,336 inhabitants with only 177 Europeans. There were two primary schools run by Catholic missionaries. A full scale administration had succeeded in imposing on a town otherwise consisting mainly of single storey houses, a governor's palace, a 'very elegant Palace of Justice', a large naval hospital, a fine church and an army barracks.

From his base at St. Louis, Faidherbe, in a series of brilliant campaigns, notably against the powerful emir of Trarza and the Muslim reformist and Toucouleur leader, El Hadj Omar, was to lay the foundations of France's West African empire. To do this he organised the now famous *Tirailleurs Sénégalais*, since Europeans did not stand up well to the climate and the prevalent diseases. By conquest or by treaty he brought most of modern Senegal and much of Soudan (Mali) under French rule. He installed an efficient military administration, and even published an official newspaper the *Moniteur du Sénégal*. Altogether Faidherbe was a remarkable man. He was a firm believer in the equality of races, and did much to increase the educational facilities of the colony. He established a school for the sons of chiefs, and lay schools for Muslims, who objected to attending the mission schools. Whilst Faidherbe wanted to

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In the country where the houses touch the sky
but where the heart is not touched
In the country where the hand is placed on the Bible
but where the Bible remains closed.*

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The forum for this great re-examination of the African past was to be *Présence Africaine*, a bi-monthly review of Negro African culture, founded by a Senegalese called Alioune Diop in 1947 and open 'to all contributors of good-will (white, yellow or black), who might be able to help define African originality and to hasten its introduction into the modern world'. Although the review was Pan-Negro in outlook, its original inspiration came from a small group of Senegalese intellectuals in association with West Indians like Césaire and Haitians like Price-Mars. There was of course nothing parochial about this. It was only that the Senegalese were the first, for the reasons outlined above, to feel really strongly about the reassertion of African culture. And when in 1956 *Présence Africaine's* efforts culminated in the first Congress of Negro Writers and Artists, the Senegalese were to play a dominant role. In his opening speech to the conference Alioune Diop, the secretary and backbone of the organisation, made a moving protest against the myth of a people without culture, a protest that earned the support of all delegates. But his attacks on assimilation can have had relatively little meaning for delegates from the English-speaking territories; whilst some of the American Negro delegates like Richard Wright felt that as far as they were concerned it was impossible to return to a past from which they had been physically and culturally removed for over three centuries. Replying to a brilliant discourse by Senghor on 'The Laws of the Negro African Culture', he asked: 'I wonder where do I, an American Negro, conditioned by the harsh industrial, abstract force of the Western world that has used stern, political prejudices

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* Translated by Ulli Beier.

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in this sense, it had to be agreed by everyone and the discussion would not end until agreement was reached. Thus in the modern African society there would be real justification for a one-party state, for in theory no one could be against the Government, since by adopting traditional African methods, all would be agreed to any given course of action. Furthermore Africans already had their own built-in socialism. In the village no one could go hungry. And by an elaborate set of social laws and customs he who had invariably ended by sharing his possessions with those who had not. Above all, Africans could bring to the world this harmony of traditional African society where agreement was reached by all on every political decision, and where a voluntary socialism was already practised—what Senghor described as 'la sagesse africaine'. If Africa had something to bring to the modern world, it was this special political experience.

Despite this intense reaction to France's assimilationist policy by the Senegalese élite, for long no one openly voiced the logical conclusion of such attacks—the demand for total independence. Up until 1958 the most extreme official demand was for a federal constitution in which the African territories could develop along their own lines and have equal political rights with France. But in France, African students were impatient of constitutional niceties which seemed to them to avoid the one and only issue—that of putting an end to colonialism. In 1952 *Présence Africaine* published a special supplement in which African students, mostly Senegalese, made themselves more than clear on this issue. And whilst it is true that students tend to be much more extreme in their political attitudes than those actually exercising power, amongst the writers in this special supplement were some who were to have considerable influence on the political situation in Senegal as representatives of the young anti-colonialist generation, such as Assane Seck and Majhemout Diop. The latter in his call for immediate, unequivocal and absolute independence was in fact not

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of introduction to be sent to the Directors of his Institute in all the towns we should be visiting. We talked for a moment at human level, then a glance at his papers, a distant look in his eyes, indicated it was time for us to leave.

Monod is an established expert on the following subjects: geology; geography: physical, climatic, regional and human; archaeology; history; marine biology; ethnography; botany; zoology; pre-history; and languages. He has over 400 publications to his name and has published two best-sellers in France. He went down in the bathyscope with Professor Piccard and with Captain Houot. His real love is the Sahara Desert. He must know it better than any other man alive. His first journey into the unknown wastes of the Sahara was in 1923, and by 1930 he had travelled its length and breadth from Algiers to Timbuktu, from Mauretania to Lake Chad. Friends called the gaunt young man, who rode off into the desert wastes alone with a camel, 'Monod le Fou'. Today he is known more respectfully as 'Monod le Saharien'. In the winter of 1954 he completed a phenomenal trek across the desert over a distance never before dared by another white man. With four camels, two Arabs, and a strict daily ration of half a litre of wine, Monod, aged 52, covered 900 kilometres in 47 days.

Theodore Monod has probably done as much as any European to give dignity to the culture and traditions of the tribes of West Africa, and to preserve these traditions for their future inheritors when the steamroller of Western civilization threatens to obliterate them. The Institut Français D'Afrique Noire, which he directs, has a federal museum in Dakar and a network of museums and research centres throughout French Black Africa. It employs scholars in every field of knowledge concerning Africa, and most important of all, it gives African scholars an opportunity to make research into their own customs, traditions and history.

Monsieur Pierre Cros, of the Press Section of the Federal Information Services, who was to help us as much as anyone in our travels in West Africa, received us in his small office on the ninth floor of the vast Federal Administration building. What impressed me most about the Federal Information Services was their very considerable knowledge of British West Africa. Fortnightly they published a resumé of the local press of Nigeria,

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Ghana and Sierra Leone, together with articles on these territories that had appeared in the major British papers.

Monsieur Cros told us that he was going that evening to a 'lunch' at the Grand Conseil building, which was being held in honour of the Secretary-General of the French National Assembly. He promised to arrange invitations for us.

Every important official and politician in Dakar was present at the 'lunch'. Black and white mingled freely. M. Cros whisked me from Governor to Inspector General, from an African Colonel to the Secretary-General of the National Assembly, to a representative of Agence France Press and a Senegalese Minister I was to meet the next day. The scene was high-powered and bewildering, but after a few drinks had been consumed the party lost much of its formality, a thing the French, especially in Africa, do not believe in, and I was pulled into conversation by an elderly French Administrator with sleek grey hair, a well-preserved figure, piercing grey eyes, and bronzed complexion. He asked me what I was doing in Dakar.

'I am spending six months travelling in West Africa.'

'Where are you going?'

'I hope to visit most of French West Africa, and spend some time in Nigeria, Ghana and Sierra Leone. I've already been to Gambia and Portuguese Guinea.'

'How do you like Dakar?'

'I was here two years ago. But even in my short absence, it's changed so much. This Grand Conseil was just a mass of scaffolding and concrete when I was last here.'

We both looked at the marbled floor, the graceful pillars, at the group of superbly dressed Africans, many of them with better dress sense than the Frenchmen they were talking to.

'Yes,' he said, suddenly giving words to a sequence of thought, 'It's a revolution, a veritable revolution.'

POLITICS AND POWER

Dakar

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Obviously the young man talking to Arnold did not agree. He told him in English: 'We'll have to drive the French out of

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665 little misguided. He handed me a copy of the party manifesto.
648 On the front it read:

> 'At the historic moment of Bandung and of the Colonial and Imperialist system, at the moment when political confusion submerges Black Africa under French domination, our duty as Africans obliges us to bring before the masses of our country the problem of national independence and the transformation of our economy into a socialist economy.'

[204] He also handed me a copy of the party newspaper, *La Lutte*, 'The Battle', which is surprisingly well produced at an intellectual level. It even had an article explaining why Sputnik stayed up. On another page a cartoon demonstrated party feeling towards France: Picture I. Thin, Belsen figure, in casque colonial, sucks from straw the lifeblood of Africa—Picture II. Fatter version of this Frenchman leaves for home, a small Africa behind him.

But the magazine was directed not only against France. Jibes were made at the Minister of the Interior of the Senegal, and at the high wages paid to Ministers. Mahjemout Diop was later arrested on the orders of the Minister of the Interior.

OLD SENEGAL

Dakar—Gorée—St. Louis

369 [491] 361 [175] Our third afternoon in Dakar, Arnold and I took the afternoon ferry to Gorée, a tiny island embraced by the bay of Dakar. This island, which until the turn of the century was better known than Dakar itself, was discovered in 1444 by Dinis Dias, one of the early Portuguese explorers, and commands the entrance to the port of Dakar, so that for long it was prized as the most strategic of islands on the Guinea Coast. Today it is no more than an historical relic, but whether against a clear blue sky or of dark grey rain clouds massing for an assault on the mainland, it serves as a reminded that though in Africa the revolution has taken place largely over the last ten years, its groundwork has been prepared by centuries of contact with Europeans and their way of life.

The small ferry was crammed with trippers, armed with

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was a borrower, only to have other people borrowing from him.

The morning after I had lunch with Diop I went to a Conference in the High Commission on Alcoholism. This, it appeared, was a grave problem in Dakar. The creation of the new Africa has its ugly sides, and this was perhaps one of its most ugly. A favourite drink, named after the local bus service, was the 'Car Rapide'. To make it you mix beer, methylated spirits and a drop of petrol. It is guaranteed to knock you out in one go. In Zuiginchor a more potent drink was made by adding a well-known Parisian perfume to beer.

A day before the Conference *Paris-Dakar*, the local daily newspaper, published an article on alcoholism in M'Backé, a large Senegalese town:

ALCOHOLISM MUST BE FOUGHT

An all out police attack is needed and would be appreciated to seek out and rid our town of a gang of drunks of both sexes who spend their time in the small shops and sordid bars which are hidden all over the town in the guise of restaurants and small eating places.

Most of the proprietors of these cafés add to their miserable occupations that of pimping. Favouring alcoholism, they nevertheless indulge in all revolting forms of debauchery.

In most parts of our town one finds these small cafés nicely divided, serving as homes and places of business.

A few posts in the ground, a roof of polished tiles, a wooden fence and there you have the ideal café.

The interior of these hovels is divided into small compartments with no ventilation and on the ground a few mattresses covered with dirty blankets. The decoration consists of a few old newspapers pasted here and there to keep out the sun. The bar stock lies among packing cases and hidden under the mattresses. In holes made for the purpose are bottles of wine, red, rosé and white, and beer.

To cover up this business known to be officially disliked, the café proprietors keep a kitchen where periodically they prepare meals, hygienically leaving a lot to be desired.

In these sordid places, the atmosphere heavy with noxious smells, they give themselves up to their anti-social pastimes. Debauchery has been given a home here. These are also the rendezvous of scoundrels and receivers of stolen goods.

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536 theatre. But the writing was powerful and distinguished. My most vivid memory of Ka at that time was an ear-shattering torrent of abuse directed at his leading lady: 'Pas de Fred Astaire ici. Çe n'est pas le Music Hall.'

Today that play is a thing of the past, which nevertheless brought him fame. Now he is engrossed in a piece about a young schoolteacher who is sent to a pagan animist village in the south of the Senegal, to found its first school. The play centres on the conflict between the educated teacher and the local witchdoctor who opposes the school. Deep in Ka's intellect is a striking preoccupation with the conflict of occidental reason with the seemingly irrational metaphysics of the forest and the bush.

Ka was seized by numerous other friends so we agreed to meet the following day at a café in the Avenue William Ponty, Dakar's main thoroughfare.

[547] The small café was crowded. Across the street the Café de Paris with its large, bad painting of Montmartre, was half empty and its clientele, sitting at the iron street tables, stared at us with vague interest. Ka was talking animatedly about nineteenth-century Russian novelists and the decline of Russian literature today. He was very typically '*rive gauche*' and indeed we might well have been in St. Germain des Prés.

'Of course, I think that Huxley is more essentially English than Graham Greene,' my companion continued in a new vein.

Later I went with Ka to his room in a small, dingy hotel in the back streets of Dakar. 'I prefer living here, away from my relations. At least one is free.' I wondered whether it wasn't because it reminded him of his life in Paris.

Together we read his latest play about Chaka, in which he treats the great Zulu as a narcissist. Once again I was struck by the power of his writing, the economy of his style. We fingered through copies of *Présence Africaine*, *Traits d'Union* and *Afrique en Marche* where he and his fellow intellectuals have their works published. [204]

668 Most striking of all is the cultural revolution, so marked in
571 Dakar, but gaining momentum from all parts of the French West African Federation. Ka Abdou Anta is a part of this revolution, which has produced a generation, albeit small, of intellectuals who can vie on equal terms with their counterparts in Europe.